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SOCIAL ORGANIZATION AND POLITICAL STRUCTURE

Social Organization

561 [304] [587] [588] [589]

Life Cycle

Dorobo men pass through three stages: ***getik***, uncircumcised boys; ***muronik***, circumcised men; and ***apaiisiek***, elders. Boys are circumcised between the ages of 15 and 18 years, and may marry at any time after circumcision when their circumstances allow. Some men in fact never marry at all, but live alone, getting occasional help from women in the settlement, and depending for sexual satisfaction on surreptitious affairs with wives of age-mates. Women are first ***tipik***, girls; then ***yosotik***, married women; and finally, when they begin to look old, ***engilokisiek***, old women. Girls marry soon after they have been circumcised.

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Kinship and Behaviour

The existing Dorobo relationship system, ***tiliet***, is structurally similar to that of the Nandi, and uses a number of Nandi terms; but it is less regular and includes in the *tiliet* a larger number of persons than does the Nandi. Moreover, the collective term ***macokor*** (which I did not find in use as a true relationship term in Nandi) is used by the Dorobo as the proper term for a number of people terminologically differentiated by the Nandi.

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Within the *tiliet* the chief terms are: In the third ascending generation, all males are ***macokor*** and all females ***makikat;*** in the second ascending generation, all males are ***kuko*** or ***akui*** and all females ***koko***.

In the first ascending generation, the terms are: ***papa*** = father, father's brothers, and mother's sister's husband; ***eiyo*** = mother, mother's sisters, and father's brother's wife; ***pukot*** = father's sister; ***konyit*** = father's sister's husband; ***mama*** = mother's brother and his wife. Terms used by women are ***sindet*** = father's sister and father's brother's wife; ***apulaiyo*** = mother's brother; ***eiyo*** = mother's brother's wife; and ***konyit*** = mother's sister's husband.

In a man's own generation, his brothers, sisters, and mother's sister's son and daughter are ***kesenda;*** mother's brother's son and daughter, ***mama;*** and the son and daughter of his father's brother and father's sister are ***macokor***. Women's terms which differ from these are: ***apulaiyo*** = mother's brother's son and daughter; ***eiyo*** = mother's sister's son and daughter.

In the first descending generation, ***apaa*** includes son, daughter, brother's son and daughter; ***mama***, sister's son and daughter, and mother's brother's son and daughter; ***macokor***, father's brother's children's children, and father's sister's children's children. In the second descending generation, both sexes are ***akui***, except mother's brother's children's children's children, which are ***mama;*** and mother's sister's children's children's children, ***kesenda***.

Among affines, wife's father is ***pamogo;*** wife's mother, ***poker;*** wife's brother, ***konyit*** and his wife, ***poker;*** wife's sister ***pukot*** and her husband, ***kipukotiet;*** wife's brother's son and wife's sister's son, ***apaa;*** wife's brother's daughter and wife's sister's daughter, ***pakuo***. Husband's father is ***pakuo*** and his mother, ***poker;*** husband's brother ***konyit*** and his wife, ***sindet;*** husband's sister, ***kamati*** and her husband, ***poker;*** husband's brother's children, ***lakuet;*** and husband's sister's children, ***apulaiyo***.

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In the *tiliet* it is the *father's brother* who stands out and occupies the special place in family life that the mother's brother does among the Nandi; not a few Dorobo did not know their mother's brother's name. Owing to the nature of Dorobo life, the father's brother is continually in contact with his brother's children, and his relations with his nephews are even closer than those of the Nandi ***mama*** with his nephews.

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585 [237] [591] that cow-dung be used for both the *tumdo* and *koroniot*, and if there are no cattle in the bridegroom's settlement it must be procured from somewhere else. Marriage is patrilocal.

Marriage with Nandi

581 C48 Eighteen marriages were recorded in genealogies between Dorobo and Nandi or members of the Nandi group:

Dorobo and Nandi women:	6	Dorobo and Nandi men:	10
Dorobo and Keyo women:	1	Dorobo and Keyo men:	1
Dorobo and Terik women:	1		

Marriage of Dorobo women to outsiders seems to be due to the poverty of the Dorobo, which in these cases would have meant that the women would have remained unmarried; such marriages also mean the accession of stock to the Dorobo.

Polygyny

595 [587] Although there is no objection to polygyny, Dorobo seldom have the means of acquiring more than one wife at a time, though several cases occurred of re-marriage after a wife's death or desertion. In one genealogy a woman had no less than four successive husbands, none of them her husband's brother, and her only issue was one daughter.

Re-marriage of Widows

587 Unlike the Nandi, the Dorobo recognize the re-marriage of widows in the normal manner on payment of bridewealth to their fathers, brothers, or other representatives; it is, however, unusual. Widows normally live with their husband's brothers, return to their parents, or else live alone.

Divorce

586 Divorce is rare, and is of one kind only—permanent. The husband can claim the return of the bridewealth. But a wife who has borne a child cannot be divorced for any cause whatsoever.

Birth

843 [834] 844 846 862 845 [224] Intercourse between husband and wife stops at the fourth or fifth month of pregnancy, and is not resumed till the child is about six months old. Birth takes place in the husband's hut, the husband going to live elsewhere nearby. The wife is attended by a midwife, *ngaitoyonit*, and her mother is present if possible. She stays in the hut for six or seven days after the birth, and the child's body must be kept covered for several weeks, even the father being allowed to see only its face. The mother must be purified by her husband, who kills a goat (which he must acquire somehow if he has none of his own) and rubs the fat and undigested grass (*siyat*) from the stomach on her face, breasts, and belly. Children are weaned at the age of about a year. Twins are not liked, and the mother's ritual uncleanness caused by their birth must be removed by the killing of a goat which is eaten by the mother and her women friends. The Dorobo say that if a man has set a trap at the time when his wife bears twins, the trap will never again catch an animal.

553 [816] [882] Children receive their first name, the spirit-name, soon after birth; as among the Nandi, this name is not used, but links the child with a protecting spirit. The second or principal name is given before the child can walk, at the time when it is first given solid food, and is called "porridge name" in imitation of the Nandi custom. Children may also be given nicknames which often refer to some physical peculiarity. After circumcision, boys become *Arap*, son of, eldest sons taking their

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patronymic from their father's porridge name. Younger sons generally take their patronymic from the father's nickname, or else from some circumstance in their own lives.

Circumcision

Boys are circumcised at the same intervals as the Nandi, and the Dorobo keep watch for the opening of the Nandi circumcision. Occasionally boys are circumcised in Nandi with other Nandi boys, but more often in the forest, as in the circumcision of 1928–30. Sometimes a Dorobo acts as operator for the Nandi. The whole procedure of circumcision (*tum*) is identical with that of the Nandi. Girls undergo the operation of clitoridectomy whenever there are enough ready to be done, and not at any stated intervals.

Age-sets

The Dorobo have borrowed the whole age-set system from the Nandi, and it works exactly as among the Nandi, with the same set-names and 15-year intervals synchronized with those of the Nandi. The reader may therefore be referred to the account of the Nandi system, p. 31. A slight difference in the sub-divisions called *mat* may be noted: the Dorobo have only three, called *Cogimich*, the senior; *Taparik*[1] or *Kipalkonyek*, the middle; and *Ruwakanik* or *Kiptoiinik*, the junior. A more significant difference is that the sets have no military or political force, for the Dorobo are not fighters, and the practical effect of the system is to introduce further behaviour patterns, as well as to modify the traditional rules of hospitality; for while no Dorobo would refuse to shelter one of his own horde, the degree of hospitality varies according to the age-set situation.

Political Structure

Land Divisions

The Dorobo live mainly in clan settlements divided between a number of districts or parishes (*korosuek*, sing. *koret*). Till about 1930 these settlements were in small clearings inside the forest; after 1937 they were spread round the outer edge of the forest.

The Clan

The clan, *oret*, is an exogamous patrilineal group with a name and a totem, *tiond ap oret*, the animal of the clan. The existence of eight clans is attested by genealogies and the census; three others are reputed to exist or to have existed, though none occurred in my records; they were, however, mentioned to me in 1927 as well as in 1938–9. Each of these clans has one totem, except Moi which has three, one of which it shares with another clan; it is not the totem which is important, but the group itself, the clan being a social group, not a group of people mystically related through their totem. The emphasis is therefore on the clan name and not on the animal, though marriage, nevertheless, is forbidden within the clan. An exception to this rule is found in the case of Moi, where intermarriage is allowed between people of different totems, an anomalous feature due possibly to the influence of the Nandi, among whom Moi marriages are common between people of different totems. (See p. 27.) There seem to be no restrictions either on marriage between clans (as among the Nandi), or on killing or eating the clan animal, which suggests that originally the Dorobo clans were non-totemic, and that their present totemism is a feature borrowed from the Nandi along with the clan names, which except for one of the reputed clans are all Nandi.

[1] The Nandi occasionally use *taparik* for this *mat*; it is a Nandi word meaning "the turves."

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are *kesenda* to each other and equals, being of the same generation. So too are the sons of the father's brother, also *Kaplelac* and *Kimnyihs*, who are *macokor* to Ego. But Ego will be circumcised at the same time as his brother A and his *macokor* C, when his other brother B and *macokor* D are too young to be circumcised; B and D will therefore belong to junior age-sets, and when Ego, A, and C have been circumcised and are allowed to marry and indulge in other male pursuits, B and D will still have the inferior status of *netik* or boys and be subordinate to their brothers as regards behaviour and social position.

Each generation is therefore liable to be stratified in two layers comprising two age-sets which cut across the relationship system; and where the kinship behaviour patterns conflict with those of the age-set, the latter will prevail. Both sets in Ego's generation, for instance, will behave in the same way to father, father's brother, and father's father; but D and B cannot behave to Ego as C behaves to Ego, because they are merely boys who do not count for much, while Ego and C are men. Similarly, in the first descending generation all will behave in the same way to Ego's generation, but K and G must give to H, E, and F the respect that H, O, and F do not give to each other or to K and G. And the principle is the same with the second descending generation.

First ascending generation	JUNIORS	SENIORS	Generation as a whole
Own generation	JUNIORS	SENIORS	Generation as a whole
First descending generation	JUNIORS	SENIORS	Generation as a whole
Second descending generation	JUNIORS	SENIORS	Generation as a whole

The effect of the age-set on behaviour is to strengthen the traditional code of behaviour by emphasizing the disparity between seniors and juniors.

Age-sets also affect hospitality, for while no Dorobo would normally refuse to shelter one of his own horde, the degree of hospitality and of the intimacy to which he is admitted vary according to whether the visitor is an age-mate or not. If he is of the same age-set as his host (no matter what their respective *mostinnek* may be), he will sleep along with the host and his wife, though he will not be given the host's wife to sleep with as among the Nandi. But if he belongs to a different age-set, the wife will